

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL SCHOOL

3E'S OF HEALTHY LIVING *Lunch Program*
EDUCATION, EXERCISE AND EATING RIGHT

February 2024 Monthly Newsletter



Resources

Click [here](#) for recordings and slides from past School Webinars.

Click [here](#) for archived newsletters.



Register for MegaCon 2024

Registration has begun for MEGACON - TDA's annual comprehensive training event for federal nutrition programs! Registration has already topped 450 people. A hotel room block is available for our attendees. Join in this fun and educational event May 14-16 in Austin. **Don't be late - register TODAY!** Visit [SquareMeals.org](https://www.squaremeals.org) for more information.



Get Ready for an Epic National

School Breakfast Week!

National School Breakfast Week is taking place March 4-8! Have a gnarly celebration week by using our all-new digital materials featuring the theme “Surf’s Up with School Breakfast”. Visit [SquareMeals](#) today to explore our digital materials and don’t forget to [tell us about your celebration plans!](#)



Next LFS Office Hours: February 14

The Local Food for Schools (LFS) team has the third office hours meeting scheduled for February 14, 2024, from 3-4 p.m. CST; grant recipients will receive the zoom link via email and LFS monthly e-blast. If you’d like to view the recorded sessions and slides from January’s office hours, please visit the [LFS webpage](#). If you are participating in the LFS grant and are not receiving communications, contact localfoodgrant@texasagriculture.gov.

RELEASE: SFSP and SSO Rural Non-Congregate Service Regulations

USDA issued an Interim Final Rule at the end of December outlining the new regulations allowing SFSP and SSO operators in rural areas to provide non-congregate meal service to participants. Stay tuned to the newsletters and [SquareMeals.org](#) for more information on how to apply!

Unanticipated School Closure Notification Forms and Guidance

If a school closes due to an unanticipated event and wants to serve students during the closure, the school district must choose an appropriate Program to operate (SFSP, SSO, or CACFP At-Risk) and notify TDA via the newly released Unanticipated School Closure Notification Form.

RELEASE: NEW Duplicative Services FAQs

TDA has released a set of FAQs related to duplicative costs. A duplicative cost is an unallowable expense that results from a Contracting Entity (CE) paying for the same service under multiple contracts using federal funding.

New Features and Food Yields in the Food Buying Guide Web-Based Tool

The Food Buying Guide has been updated with new foods and features, including an interactive flow chart on using the preparation yield and an ounces-to-pounds calculator.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Data Report in TX-UNPS

Each year between March 1 and March 20, CEs must report eligibility and enrollment information that is reflective of the students at each school as of April 1. This includes CEs that are not planning to operate CEP in the upcoming year. This information (1) is preliminary data that helps CEs and TDA to identify schools that are potentially eligible to operate CEP and (2) will automatically populate the ISP fields in the CEP application screen in TX-UNPS.

RELEASE: Updated TDA and USDA CEP Resources

TDA has released and posted an updated Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Calculation Worksheet for Identified Student Percentage (ISP) and Claiming form. The form has been updated to reflect the reduction of the CEP Eligibility threshold from 40% to 25%. Additionally, USDA has provided a new SY 2023-2024 Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Monthly Federal Reimbursement Estimator tool.

Food Allergies: New Online Resources

FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education) has released an improved Food Allergy Academy. Explore instructor-led classes, self-guided courses, and live webinars covering a variety of food allergy topics! Be ready to feed your participants safely. [Visit here for more information.](#)

ICN Wants to Hear from You!

ICN wants you to join their task force to identify and bridge gaps in their training resources. Starting in March, attend a series of four virtual meetings with other child nutrition professionals where you'll share your thoughts with ICN staff! [Complete the interest form here.](#)

Grant Opportunity: Oliver Foundation

Healthy Choices Grant

The Oliver Foundation Healthy Choices Grants are open for 2024! Funding will be awarded to applicants aiming to improve child nutrition and physical activity through innovative programs. Learn more about the grant opportunities and [apply here](#) – Deadline for applications is April 15.

Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards

The Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards spotlight schools' innovative practices and efforts in improving the nutritional quality of their school meals. Visit [here](#) to learn more about how to apply for recognition. Recognized recipients will receive a stipend to attend the HMI Summit in April and October. Don't miss out on an information webinar February 28, 2024, from 11 a.m.-noon – [Find the registration link here!](#)

Reminder for all TX-UNPS and WBSCM Entities

Contracting Entities can now assign two User Access Managers for TX-UNPS and two User Admins for the WBSCM system.

NSLP Annual Financial Report

2024 Annual NSLP Financial Report (FY2022-2023 Data) opened January 1, 2024, and is due by March 31, 2024. The 2024 Annual NSLP Financial Report will be completed via [this link](#). Additional Resources may be located at [this link](#).

FSMC Contract Timelines

[Click here](#) for the Food Service Management Company Contract submittal and approval timelines.

NSLP-USDA Foods Inventory Management

Per current federal and state guidelines, your inventory levels may not exceed a 6 Months-On-Hand level. Once your requested inventory is allocated to your account, ensure you utilize it by placing delivery orders. By ordering your inventory, you are reducing your overall inventory and remaining compliant with federal and state guidelines. If you are unable to utilize your inventory and find another school within your respective region, USDA Foods transfers are available. Please use the H4529 transfer JotForm located in SquareMeals.

Click the headline for more information including storage reminders and tips for viewing inventory

Reminder: Acceptance of USDA Foods **Delivered by State-Contracted Warehouses**

TDA issued a friendly reminder regarding the do's and don'ts to accepting USDA Foods at time of delivery by a state-contracted warehouse.

USDA Foods Ordering Updates

- DoD FFV participants must complete their receipts in FFAVORS within 7 days of delivery from the DoD FFV vendor.
- PY2024 entitlement has been fully utilized and ordering additional truckloads of USDA Foods is considered complete for PY2024.
- The estimated entitlement for PY2025 and DoD FFV distribution has been applied in WBSCM. It is currently estimated at .30 per meal and is expected to update again in February once USDA finalizes the per meal rate of assistance.
- WBSCM Catalogs are now open for round 1 ordering for PY2025. Schools can now place requisitions in the system for Direct Delivery and Processing Diversions. Catalogs will close on March 1st and schools will no longer be able to submit requests after this date.





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COMMISSIONER SID MILLER
This product was funded by USDA.
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Texas Department of Agriculture | P.O. Box 12847, Austin, TX 78711

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